(b) A High Level Expert Team headed by the Chairman, Central Water Commission has been constituted by Government of India, to suggest the remedial measures to avoid occurrence of such incidents in future.

Status of special category States under AIBP

1689. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether certain States are eligible for special category status under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether in view of two-third of area of Rajasthan being of the Thar Desert and declared as drought and famine prone area, the Union Government proposes to confer the special status to Rajasthan under AIBP alongwith other eligible States; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the time by when the special status is likely to be conferred?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) North Eastern States, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Jammu and Kashmir are classified as special category States under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP). In addition, undivided Koraput, Bolangir and Kalahandi districts of Orissa are also treated at par with special category States under AIBP.

(c) and (d) In order to give a boost to irrigation development in the drought prone area of the country including the State of Rajasthan, the Government of India has made provisions in the AIBP guidelines amended in December 2006. In accordance with the existing guidelines, irrigation projects benefiting drought prone area are eligible for receiving 90% grant of the project cost which is at par with the special category States. Further, in normal cases, a new project could be included in AIBP only on completion of an ongoing project of the State under AIBP *i.e.* on one to one basis. However, the project benefiting drought prone area could be considered for inclusion in AIBP in relaxation to one to one criteria.

Sindhu basin

1690. SHRI VIJAYKUMAR RUPANI:

SHRI NATUJI HALAJI THAKOR:

SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Kutch region of Gujarat is also a part of Sindhu Basin;

(b) whether Government of India has received representation dated 7 February, 2008 from the State Government of Gujarat that since the Kutch region of Gujarat has conditions similar to Rajasthan, the Indus water should be reallocated so that Gujarat is also allotted waters proportionately; and

(c) if so, the action taken by Government of India and reaction of the water-sharing States thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Kutch region of Gujarat is not considered to form a part of the Indus Basin as per the present available basin maps or the Irrigation Commission Report of 1972.

(b) Hon'ble Minister of Water Supply, Water Resources, Urban Development and Urban Housing, Government of Gujarat has written a letter dated 07.02.08 to the Hon'ble Union Minister of Water Resources regarding allocation of Indus water to Kachchh region of Gujarat. He has referred to earlier letter dated 23.03.04 from Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat in the matter and letter dated 01.08.05 from his predecessor, requesting for appropriate action by Central Government for allocation of Indus water (*i.e.* Ravi-Beas-Sutlej water). He has requested for an early decision.

(c) Hon'ble Union Minister of Water Resources has responded to the above letter on 18.03.08 indicating the water issues amongst the present beneficiary States of Eastern Rivers, some of which are before the Hon'ble Supreme Court including a Presidential Reference on the Punjab Termination of Agreement Act, 2004 enacted by Punjab Vidhan Sabha, whose outcome is awaited. Under the circumstances, till the existing issues get resolved and the present beneficiary States are in a a position to spare some water, it might not be appropriate to open any issue for reallocation of water.

Scenario of ground water level

1691. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI:
DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA:
Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the findings of the Planning Commission's Expert Group Report on ground water level scenario in the country;

(b) out of total blocks in the country, how many are dark, gray and safe, State-wise;

(c) how many areas in the country, have been declared critical, overexploited, State-wise;

(d) out of the total irrigated area in the country, how much is covered by surface and groundwater irrigation, State-wise;

(e) how much water has been pumped out as compared to recharging thereof during the last three years, State-wise; and

(f) how 'alarming' is fast depleting scenario of groundwater in the country, State wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) As per the Report of the Expert Group constituted by the Planning Commission on "Ground Water Management and Ownership", out of 5723 assessment units assessed jointly by State Ground Water Departments and Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) in the country, 71% (4078) assessment units are in safe category, 10% (550) semi critical, 4% (226) critical and 15% (839) categorized as overexploited.

(d) Out of the 86.2 million hectare of irrigation potential utilized upto the end of 2006-07, 46.1 million hectare is from surface water and 40.1 million hectare is from ground water. State-wise details